

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the prior art rejections set forth by the Examiner under 35 USC §§102 and 103. Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art references of record, whether considered alone, or in combination, fail to either teach or suggest Applicants' presently claimed invention. For the sake of clarification, Applicants have modified the independent claim in this application in order to further specify that the *Not Claimed*
funnel is moved relative to the product package template cavities in two dimensions or directions of motion such that the funnel is selectively located above desired ones of the product package template cavities. Applicants submit that the references of record provide no teaching or suggestion whatsoever regarding this claimed method. Support for this modification is found throughout the specification and specifically on page 4, beginning on line 5, for example, wherein the specification states that "the template member is selectively movable through a range of motion defined by an x-y axis so that each cavity of the template may be selectively positioned beneath the feed mechanism."

None of the references of record teach or suggest this advance in the art. It is this motion that advantageously allows each individual cavity to be selectively filled with one or more solid pharmaceutical products according to a desired prescription. Indeed, as even acknowledged by the Examiner, the *Knudsen* prior art reference, United States patent No. 4,490,963 fails to disclose dispensing one or more products from a plurality of different drug sources into a common funnel and effecting relative motion between the funnel and a plurality of product package template cavities. As noted, the claims have been further modified to reflect that the relative motion is in at least two directions or dimensions, thus further distinguishing from the art.

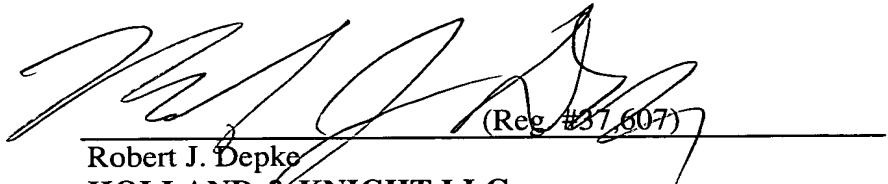
In attempting to overcome this recognized efficiency, the Examiner has now cited the *Siegel* reference, United States patent No. 4,834,264. However, *Siegel* fails to provide any

teaching or suggestion whatsoever regarding the relative motion of a funnel that dispenses solid pharmaceuticals from a plurality of canisters and individual ones of a plurality of product package template cavities. As noted above, Applicants have now modified the claims to further specify that the relative motion is in at least two dimensions or directions. It is also important to recognize that the cited *Siegel* reference does not disclose dispensing one or more products from a plurality of different drug sources into a common funnel and effecting relative motion between the funnel and a plurality of product package template cavities as asserted by the Examiner.

In the cited *Siegel* reference, a dispensing apparatus includes a hopper including a support frame and a collar mounted on the frame for receiving and retaining a bulk supply of solid pharmaceuticals or other objects. A stirring mechanism is supplied to agitate the solid pharmaceutical products. A single supply of material such as, for example, tablets may be placed within the hopper and agitated so that the tablets will pass into a separating aperture or separator plate that includes a plurality of apertures corresponding to the cavities of a solid pharmaceutical product package that is to be filled. See, for example, the summary of the invention in column 3 lines 8 through 45. The tablets fill individual cavities in the separator plate and the stirring mechanism is utilized in order to ensure that all of the cavities in the separator plate are temporarily filled. Through the relative motion of plates with cavities and/or holes, a single blister package card may be simultaneously filled with multiple individual solid pharmaceutical products. However, the structure described in the cited *Siegel* reference cannot be used for placing multiple different solid pharmaceutical products into individual cavities unless the overall filling process is repeated with a different solid pharmaceutical product. Even if this were to occur, every cavity would have the same number of different products. In other words, in the cited *Siegel* reference, every single cavity is filled with an identical product or products if the process is run multiple times.

The subject matter of the presently claimed invention allows substantially greater flexibility and usefulness in that one or more different medications may be selectively placed in each location during a single filling process. The prior references of record, whether considered alone, or in combination, provide no such capability whatsoever. Accordingly, in light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner now withdraw these rejections and allow all claims in the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail on June 3, 2003 in an envelope addressed to:

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. J. K." followed by a stylized surname. Below the signature is a horizontal line, and underneath the line, the words "Attorney for Applicants" are printed in a smaller, sans-serif font.

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